



STATE OF INDIANA

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STATE EXAMINER DIRECTIVE 2015-6

Date: November 18, 2015

Subject: Materiality threshold for reporting irregular variances, losses, shortages, and thefts

Authority: IC 5-11-1-10; IC 5-11-1-21; IC 5-11-1-27

Application: This Directive applies to all political subdivisions

From: Paul D. Joyce, CPA, State Examiner

For purposes of this directive, "political subdivision" means all counties, townships, cities, towns, school corporations, library districts, fire protection districts, public transportation corporations, local hospital authorities or corporations, local airport authority districts, special service districts, special taxing districts, and other separate local governmental entities that may sue and be sued. Ind. Code § 5-11-1-27(d); Ind. Code § 5-11-10.5-1.

Indiana Code § 5-11-1-27(j) states:

All erroneous or irregular material variances, losses, shortages, or thefts of political subdivision funds or property shall be reported immediately to the state board of accounts. For all material variances, losses, shortages, or thefts, the state board of accounts shall:

- (1) determine the amount of funds involved and report the amount to the appropriate government and law enforcement officials;
- (2) determine the internal control weakness that contributed to or caused the condition; and
- (3) make written recommendations to the appropriate legislative body or appropriate official overseeing the internal control system addressing:
 - (A) the method of correcting the condition; and
 - (B) the necessary internal control policies and internal control procedures that must be modified to prevent a recurrence of the condition.

A. Materiality Threshold for Political Subdivisions.

In general, each political subdivision must develop their own policy on materiality because the causes of irregular variances, losses, shortages, and thefts are as broad and varied as the political subdivisions in

which the incidents occur. For example, a \$500 variance in Fort Wayne is not necessarily as concerning as a \$500 variance in Pershing Township, Jackson County. On the other hand, a \$100 variance in Fort Wayne that occurs every Friday may be material.

Political subdivisions must recognize that variances, losses, shortages, and thefts may occur. If an incident occurs, the political subdivision should have a policy in place that outlines the steps to be taken. The policy should include a materiality threshold at which point the political subdivision reports incidents to the State Board of Accounts.

Each political subdivision is the best determiner of the qualitative and quantitative factors unique to the unit in arriving at materiality.

The policy should be detailed, and materiality thresholds should distinguish between incidents involving cash and other types of assets. The policy should also address maintenance of documentation and resolution of incidents that do not meet the materiality threshold.

The policy should also consider IC 5-11-1-27(1), which requires public officials who have actual knowledge of or reasonable cause to believe that there has been a misappropriation of public funds to immediately send written notice of the misappropriation to the State Board of Accounts and the prosecuting attorney.

If a political subdivision does not develop a policy on materiality, then the threshold is \$0.00 and the political subdivision must report *all* irregular variances, losses, shortages, and thefts to the State Board of Accounts.

B. Procedure to Report Material Variances, Losses, Shortages, and Theft.

When an irregular variance, loss, shortage, or theft is determined material pursuant to a political subdivision's policy on materiality (or, if no policy on materiality is developed, whenever there is any incident of irregular variance, loss, shortage, or theft), the subdivision must report the incident to the State Board of Accounts.

On the State Board of Accounts' website there is a notification link, which allows public officials to report via e-mail material irregular variances, losses, shortages, or thefts. Telephone and in-person reporting is also acceptable. Reports will be followed up with a return e-mail or call to gather additional information as necessary. All reports of irregular variances, losses, shortages, or thefts are maintained by the State Board of Accounts.

When a report is received, the State Board of Accounts will use a qualitative and quantitative analysis to determine materiality for investigative and reporting purposes, as well as written internal control recommendations as required by Ind. Code § 5-11-1-27(j).

This Directive may be amended from time to time and may be rescinded at any time in writing by the State Examiner or a Deputy State Examiner.



Paul D. Joyce, CPA
State Examiner



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Burns' Indiana Statutes Annotated
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*** Current through the 2015 First Regular Session of the 119th General Assembly, P.L. 1-259 (end) ***

Title 5 State And Local Administration
Article 11 Public Funds -- Accounting, State Board of Accounts
Chapter 1 State Board of Accounts -- Accounting System for Public Bodies -- Reports and Supervision

Go to the Indiana Code Archive Directory

Burns Ind. Code Ann. § 5-11-1-27 (2015)

5-11-1-27. Board oversight of internal control standards and procedures.

(a) As used in this section, "legislative body" has the meaning set forth in *IC 36-1-2-9*.

(b) As used in this section, "material" means a significant or consequential amount, as determined by the state examiner and approved by the audit committee.

(c) As used in this section, "personnel" means an officer or employee of a political subdivision whose official duties include receiving, processing, depositing, disbursing, or otherwise having access to funds that belong to the federal government, state government, a political subdivision, or another governmental entity.

(d) As used in this section, "political subdivision" has the meaning set forth in *IC 5-11-10.5-1*.

(e) In the compliance guidelines authorized under section 24 [*IC 5-11-1-24*] of this chapter, the state board of accounts shall define and the audit committee shall approve not later than November 1, 2015, the acceptable minimum level of internal control standards and internal control procedures for internal control systems of political subdivisions, including the following:

- (1) Control environment.
- (2) Risk assessment.
- (3) Control activities.
- (4) Information and communication.
- (5) Monitoring.

The internal control standards and procedures shall be developed to promote government accountability and transparency.

(f) Not later than November 1, 2015, the state board of accounts shall develop or designate approved personnel training materials as approved by the audit committee, to implement this section.

(g) After June 30, 2016, the legislative body of a political subdivision shall ensure that:

(1) the internal control standards and procedures developed under subsection (e) are adopted by the political subdivision; and

(2) personnel receive training concerning the internal control standards and procedures adopted by the political subdivision.

(h) After June 30, 2016, the fiscal officer of a political subdivision shall certify in writing that:

(1) the minimum internal control standards and procedures defined under subsection (e) have been adopted by the political subdivision; and

(2) personnel, who are not otherwise on leave status, have received training as required by subsection (g)(2).

The certification shall be filed with the state board of accounts at the same time as the annual financial report required by section 4(a) [IC 5-11-1-4(a)] this chapter is filed. The certification shall be filed electronically in the manner prescribed under IC 5-14-3.8-7.

(i) After June 30, 2016, if the state board of accounts finds during an audit of a political subdivision that:

(1) the political subdivision has not adopted the internal control standards and procedures required under subsection (g)(1); or

(2) personnel of the political subdivision have not received the training required under subsection (g)(2);

the state board of accounts shall issue a comment in its examination report for the political subdivision. If, during a subsequent audit, the state board of accounts finds a violation described in subdivision (1) or (2) has not been corrected, the political subdivision has sixty (60) days after the date the state board of accounts notifies the political subdivision of its findings to correct the violation. If a violation is not corrected within the required period, the state board of accounts shall forward the information to the department of local government finance.

(j) All erroneous or irregular material variances, losses, shortages, or thefts of political subdivision funds or property shall be reported immediately to the state board of accounts. For all material variances, losses, shortages, or thefts, the state board of accounts shall:

(1) determine the amount of funds involved and report the amount to the appropriate government and law enforcement officials;

(2) determine the internal control weakness that contributed to or caused the condition; and

(3) make written recommendations to the appropriate legislative body or appropriate official overseeing the internal control system addressing:

(A) the method of correcting the condition; and

(B) the necessary internal control policies and internal control procedures that must be modified to prevent a

recurrence of the condition.

(k) The legislative body or the appropriate official overseeing the internal control system shall immediately implement the policies and procedures recommended by the state board of accounts under subsection (j)(3)(B).

(l) A public officer who has actual knowledge of or reasonable cause to believe that there has been a misappropriation of public funds or assets of the public office, including:

- (1) information obtained as a result of a police report;
- (2) an internal audit finding; or
- (3) another source indicating that a misappropriation has occurred;

shall immediately send written notice of the misappropriation to the state board of accounts and the prosecuting attorney serving in the area governed by the political subdivision.

(m) If the attorney general institutes civil proceedings related to this section or under *IC 5-11-5-1*, the attorney general shall seek, in addition to the recovery of any funds misappropriated, diverted, or unaccounted for, restitution of:

- (1) costs incurred by the state board of accounts; and
- (2) all costs and reasonable attorney's fees incurred by the attorney general;

in connection with the civil proceedings.

HISTORY: P.L.117-2011, § 2, eff. July 1, 2011; P.L.184-2015, § 6, emergency effective July 1, 2015.

NOTES: Amendments.

The 2015 amendment substituted "'legislative body' has the meaning set forth in *IC 36-1-2-9*" for "'local government' means county, city, town, or township" in (a); added (b) through (d), (f) through (i), (l), and (m); redesignated former (b) through (d) as (e), (j), and (k); rewrote (e); in the introductory language of (j), in the first sentence, added "material" and substituted "political subdivision" for "local government" and added "For all material variances, losses, shortages, or thefts" in the second sentence; and updated an internal reference.